

Michigan Women

A Publication
of the
Michigan
Women's
Commission

Summer 2007



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MAJOR VICTORY FOR MICHIGAN!

10 years ago, Diane Madsen and Jay Roberts-Eveland got mad. Their daughters, and girl's athletic teams statewide, experienced discrimination in game scheduling. In 1997, six girls' sports (and no boys' sports) were scheduled in nontraditional seasons. This inequity limited opportunities for college sports recruitment, scholarships, recognition and awards.

The two moms formed Communities for Equity (CFE), which filed a federal lawsuit against the Michigan High School

Athletic Association, *Communities for Equity v MHSAA*. CFE won in federal district court in 2001, but MHSAA continued to appeal the case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. However, on April 2, the U.S. Supreme Court announced that it refused to hear the case. The appeals were over. The court's ruling, requiring the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) to equalize the seasons in which girls and boys play, beginning with the Fall, 2007 season, will change sports for all of Michigan's girls and women.

"The MHSAA's compliance plan, that will now be in effect, orders the MHSAA to realign the sports seasons. The full responsibility for seasonal implementation and support issues will fall upon school districts." Diane Madsen, named plaintiff states: "CFE is looking forward to working with school districts in ensuring that they understand their responsibilities under the law."

"This final ruling," states plaintiff Jay Robert-Eveland, "has given young men and women in Michigan the opportunity to join together with equal protection and support for maximizing

their potential". (www.communitiesforequity.com)

The following scheduling changes will be made: girls' golf changes from spring to fall; boys' tennis changes from spring to fall; volleyball changes from winter to fall; girls' basketball changes from fall to winter; boys' golf changes from fall to spring; and girls' tennis from fall to spring.

"This nine-year delay of justice has already disadvantaged a generation of girls," said Neena Chaudhry, NWLC senior counsel and one of the lead attorneys

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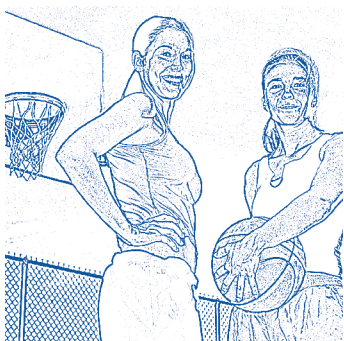
STAFF:

Judy Karandjeff, Executive Director • Elizabeth Thompson, Program Specialist • Jacqueline Sweet, Intern

Major Victory for Michigan!

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in the case. "Unfortunately, the existing damage cannot be undone. But we can look forward. Future generations of Michigan high school girls who want to participate in athletics will get the equal opportunities for which they have long waited." (www.nwlc.org)



June marked the 35th anniversary of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX says: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity received Federal financial assistance." Yet we know from recent studies, by the Women's Sports Foundation (www.womensportsfoundation.org) and the National Women's Law Center (www.nwlc.org), that there is more work we all have to do in order to achieve equality in education. Thanks to Communities for Equity and others, we are making progress in Michigan!

New State-Developed High School Sex Education Curriculum

The Michigan Departments of Education and Community Health have developed a model high school curriculum that addresses HIV and other STDs, as an additional part of the state-developed Michigan Model for Health® curricula. The new curriculum is designed to align with the Health Education Merit Curriculum guidelines, state law and policy, and research and best practice. The new 22-lesson curriculum is entitled *Healthy and Responsible Relationships*.

True to its title, the curriculum emphasizes building healthy relationships, helping young people make good decisions now and in the future. The curriculum includes implementation options for districts with both abstinence-based and abstinence-only approaches. These options give school districts maximum flexibility to exercise local control over curriculum decisions. Although school districts can choose their own curriculum or textbook, many have chosen to implement the state developed Michigan Model for Health® for their health instruction.

In Michigan schools, sex education programs are adopted at a

district level, with the participation of broad-based Sex Education Advisory Boards that include district educators, parents, community health professionals, clergy, and students making recommendations regarding what should be taught in that district across the K-12 curriculum. Parents must make up fifty percent of the Advisory Board's membership, and the Advisory Board must represent the viewpoints of the broader community.

In Michigan, HIV/AIDS education is mandated but sex education is not. However, a representative 2004 EPIC-MRA survey of parents indicates that seventy percent of parents believe that students should be taught about both abstinence and how to use condoms and other forms of contraceptives and ten percent believe that students should only be taught about the importance of abstinence from sex. The majority of the 750+ Michigan school districts serving 1.7+ million school children choose to offer sex education and programs. At the high school level, most programs (eighty percent) are more comprehensive and including the teaching of risk reduction (including use of condoms) for disease and pregnancy prevention.

Additionally, the Departments of Education and Community Health have collaborated in the development of model curricula, materials review panels, data analysis and dissemination, bill analyses, and policy documents addressing the prevention of HIV and other STDs. Professionals in education and public health have formed a connected network so that classroom teachers have the support of community resources on issues such as prevention, counseling and testing, screening, and treatment.

If you are interested in learning about the program offered in your school district, contact your local school district administrator and/or Sex Education Supervisor for more information or consider volunteering to serve on the local Sex Education Advisory Board. To find out more about *Healthy and Responsible Relationships*, go to www.emc.cmich.edu. For more about HIV and sex education in Michigan public schools, contact Laurie Bechhofer, Michigan Department of Education, at BechhoferL@michigan.gov.

Governor's Blueprint for Preventing Unintended Pregnancy

- 40.5 % of pregnancies in Michigan are unintended
- If all pregnancies were intended, abortion would be almost entirely eliminated, teen pregnancies would be reduced by 79% and there would be significant reductions in infant mortality, child abuse and neglect and welfare dependency

At the direction of the Governor in 2003, a workgroup, with representatives from the Governor's office, Michigan Women's Commission and the Michigan Departments of Community Health, Human Services, Education and Labor and Economic Growth, created the first Blueprint for Preventing Unintended Pregnancies. While that Blueprint continues to evolve, several major milestones have been successfully reached.

Below are the first four initiatives of the Blueprint:

1. Michigan requested and received a waiver from the federal government to allow expanded access to family planning through Medicaid, for women earning up to 185% of the poverty level. This expansion is the Plan First! Program. Since Plan First! was introduced in July 2006, more than 35,000 women have signed up for it, with an estimated saving to the state of approximately \$27 million per year.
2. The *Talk Early & Talk Often* program helps parents of middle school children develop the necessary skills to talk to their children about abstinence and sexuality. Since it began in October 2005, more than 70 workshops have been held throughout Michigan in public and parochial schools, medical centers, worship centers, health departments, and libraries, reaching more than 800 parents. Survey results from parents who participated have been overwhelmingly positive. For more information, please go to <http://www.michigan.gov/miparentresources/0,1607,7-107-37383---,00.html>.
3. Contraceptive Equity. The Governor has called upon the legislature to require that health plans that cover prescription drugs also cover birth control.
4. New Clinical Guideline. Relevant health care providers have been challenged to engage their patients in discussion on this crucial issue, by including discussions about family planning with all men and women of childbearing age, to ask them about their intentions regarding pregnancy and to provide information on family planning. An advisory group of providers is building a new Clinical Guideline and toolkit for physicians and other providers to use in counseling their patients.

THE WHITE HOUSE PROJECT

Marie Wilson, president of the White House Project, spoke to the Michigan Women's Commission and other women's groups on May 23, to gauge interest in bringing the Project's political leadership program to Michigan. Wilson, former president of the Ms. Foundation and co-founder of "Take your daughter to work day," started the White House Project (WHP) in 1998 to increase women's participation in political leadership in the United States.

Wilson authored *Closing the Leadership Gap* in 2004. In this book she identifies four barriers to women's leadership: authority, ambition, ability and authenticity. She writes that women are not portrayed with authority. Women have to work much harder than their male counterparts to be seen as commanding. Women leaders must focus much more on appearance and credentials. Women are taught that ambition is not "ladylike," so this necessary leadership trait has been suppressed in women. Women often doubt their ability. According to WHP research, a woman needs to be asked an average of three times to run for office before seriously considering it. Finally, the authenticity, or fit, of the leadership role can be a barrier. Rather than trying to fit into a traditional leadership role, Wilson states that women should expand the definition of a successful leader to fit their needs and ambitions.

The WHP's goal is to show women that they possess the authority, ambition, ability, and authenticity to take leadership roles, whether in the boardroom, political office, or their individual lives. The WHP's programs demystify the political process and leadership skills. Their training targets a diverse group of women, varying in age, race and economic background, through recruiting and scholarships. The training includes sessions on fundraising, practice in debate, and information-sharing by panels of successful women leaders, to show participants that women can be and are leaders.

Wilson stresses that women must act. Even if an individual woman doesn't want to run for office or run a company, she can still live what Wilson calls a "political life." She can encourage a friend to run for office, stay informed, and, simply, vote. These actions are key parts of achieving a critical mass of women in power. As Wilson says, "Women populate half the democracy; we should occupy half the positions of leadership – both for gender equity and because women, a natural resource, should be mined for energy."

To learn more about the White House Project, visit www.thewhitehouseproject.org.

Second Parent Adoption, Taking Care of Our Children

House Bill 4259, introduced by Representative Paul Condino earlier this year, directly affects children who are in need of a permanent, loving two parent family and children who are already living with same-sex parents. This Second Parent Adoption bill recently passed through the Michigan House Judiciary Committee and awaits a vote of the full House of Representatives. The Coalition for Adoption Rights Equality (CARE) is assisting Representative

Condino in passing this pro-child legislation to protect all children and all families, regardless of the parents' marital status or sexual orientation.

The bill will amend the current Michigan Adoption Code to provide children with the legal protection of two parents whether those parents are married or not clarifying the ambiguity of the current Michigan adoption code.

Having only one legal parent puts children at risk when that parent is the

only one to make crucial medical decisions, engage in important conversations with school officials, and provide a child with the work place benefits afforded only legal parents. Further second parent adoption establishes a legal relationship between parents and child and ensures children have the financial, legal and emotional security of two parents. It also ensures that both parents are financially responsible for their children in the event of death or separation of the parents.

Office of the Children's Ombudsman, and the Michigan Women's Commission, among other Michigan and National organizations.

Because of the substantial number of children in need of permanent homes, adoption laws should be expanded to increase the number of potential adoptive parents. Who can adopt is based on parenting ability, and is based on what's best for the child, and not on personal characteristics such as marital status, race, religion or sexual orientation. Michigan needs more adoptive parents, not restrictions against them.

If you would like to participate in supporting this bill and protecting Michigan's children please visit CARE's website at www.secondparentadoption.org, or contact Penny Gardner, Community Organizer, CARE at 517 484 4512



The grass-roots movement for the passage of this bill is led by CARE, and includes support from the National Association of Social Workers-Michigan Chapter, the Child Welfare League of America, Michigan's

Legislation of Interest

HB 4259 (Representative Paul Condino) - bill would allow second parent adoption. House Judiciary Committee supported, and on Second Reading in the House. MWC supports.

HB 4295-4196 (Representatives Steve Bieda and Kathleen Law) - **SB 41 and SB 42** (Senators Martha Scott and Gilda Jacobs) - bills would provide fairness at the pharmacy by providing insurance coverage for contraceptives. Assigned to the House Health Policy Committee. Senate bills assigned to the Senate Health Policy Committee. MWC supports.

HB 4625-4627 (Representatives Joan Bauer, Pam Brynes, Kathleen Law) - bills provide for compensation equally for work of comparable value

and create a Commission on Pay Equity. Passed House Labor Committee and on Second Reading in the House. MWC supports.

SB 415-416 (Senators Deborah Cherry and Tony Stamas) - bills require schools to provide information regarding risks of human papillomavirus (HPV) and availability of the vaccine for HPV. Passed Senate and assigned to the House Health Policy Committee. MWC supports the concept.

SB 417 (Senator Liz Brater) - bill would provide for compensation equally for work of comparable value. Assigned to Senate Commerce and Tourism Committee. MWC supports.

Women Outvote Men in 2006 Election

VOTER REGISTRATION STATISTICS: 2004 AND 2006 GENERAL ELECTIONS*

	Voting Age Population (VAP)	% of Voting Age Population	Registered Voters	% of VAP Registered	% of Reg. Voters Total	Voter Turnout	Turnout (% of Reg Voters)	% of Total Turnout
2004								
Male	3,665,928	48.5%	3,301,608	90.1%	46.3%	2,166,210	65.6%	45.8%
Female	3,916,872	51.8%	3,836,616	98.0%	53.7%	2,564,110	66.8%	54.2%
TOTAL**	7,560,344	100.0%	7,138,224	94.4%	100.0%	4,730,320	66.3%	100.0%
2006								
Male	3,700,415	48.6%	3,314,567	89.6%	46.4%	1,754,025	52.9%	46.2%
Female	3,916,872	51.4%	3,825,456	97.7%	53.6%	2,038,626	53.3%	53.8%
TOTAL***	7,617,287	100.0%	7,140,023	93.7%	100.0%	3,792,651	53.1%	100.0%

**NOTE: no gender designation on 346 registered voters.

***NOTE: no gender designation on 727 registered voters.

*Election Dates: 11/2/2004;
11/7/2006

Source: Michigan Qualified Voter File & U.S. Census Bureau

SECRETARY OF STATE DECISION

On April 5, the Michigan Department of State completed its review of the complaint filed by Joseph Cella, President of Fidelis of Michigan. The complaint alleged that the Michigan Women's Commission and its Executive Director, Judy Karandjeff, engaged in conduct that violated the Michigan Campaign Finance Act, by hosting the "Run, Girl, Run" workshops. The review found that participating in an informational seminar did not constitute a contribution or expenditure. Further, nothing encouraged workshop participants to take positions on candidates or ballot proposals. The review stated that "the Department has determined that there is no reason to believe that the MWC or Ms. Karandjeff knowingly violated section 57 of the MCFA. The Department considers this matter closed and will take no further action concerning your complaint."

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CALENDAR

July 7 – 12, Detroit, 98th NAACP Annual Convention, See www.naACP.org/events/convention/convention_07/

July 8-14, Houghton, Michigan Technological University, "Women in Engineering," week-long experience for high school women to investigate careers in engineering and science. MTU Youth Programs Office, Call (906) 487-2219

July 13-15, Dearborn, Hyatt Regency Hotel, 2007 National NOW Conference, hosted by Detroit NOW. Contact Jacquie Steingold at (313) 838-6152 or steingoldj@sbcglobal.net or See <http://www.now.org/organization/conference/2007/>

July 26 – 29, East Lansing, MSU Kellogg Center, 2007 Summer School for Women Workers. See www.ilir.umich.edu/LSC

Aug 7 – 12, Oceana County, Michigan Womyn's Music Festival. See <http://www.michfest.com/> for more information.

Aug. 26, Women's Equality Day – Anniversary of the ratification of the 19th amendment to U.S. Constitution providing women the right to vote, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. Michigan Women's Historical Center and Hall of Fame, 213 W. Main Street, Lansing. See <http://www.aauw-michigan.org/content/blogcategory/12/12/>

Sept. 19, 10:00 a.m., Lansing, 110 W. Michigan Ave. Michigan Women's Commission meeting, Call (517) 241-2396

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